

What is claimed is:

1. A method of inhibiting coal oxidation in a coal pile comprising coating all surfaces of coal exposed to air with an oxidation inhibiting amount of a composition comprising (a) a water soluble cationic polymer and (b) a wetting agent selected from an anionic or nonionic surfactant, or mixtures thereof.

2. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein said composition is effective to inhibit coal self-ignition.

3. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein said cationic polymer is diethylaminetriamine/adipic acid/epichlorohydrin polymer or aminomethylated polyacrylamide.

4. The method as recited in claim 3, wherein from about 0.05 weight percent to about 20 weight percent of said composition is diethylaminetriamine/adipic acid/epichlorohydrin polymer or aminomethylated polyacrylamide and from about 75 weight percent to about 99.9 weight percent of said composition is water.

5. The method as recited in claim 4, wherein said composition comprises from about 0.05 to about 5 weight percent anionic surfactant.

6. The method as recited in claim 5, wherein said anionic surfactant is a dioctylsulfosuccinate.

7. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein said mixture of nonionic and anionic surfactants is a mixture of nonylphenol ethoxylates and dioctylsulfosuccinates.

8. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein said nonionic surfactant is a blend of nonylphenol and octylphenol ethoxylates.

9. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein said composition is applied without a foaming agent.